

In the Spirit

I love Fran's column today about the veil between the worlds being thinnest this time of year. In the agricultural societies that instituted many of the ancestor-venerating rituals that are still observed at this time of year, preparing to survive the winter was serious business. I am ever mindful of our precarious New England winters and every year I try to purchase something that will help me weather a power outage in very cold temps. Last year I bought a solar lantern. This year I bought thermal emergency sleeping bags. A few years ago I acquired a big water tank (big for one person), and some emergency toilets. I keep a close eye on the weather and have a plan to evacuate, just in case. I stock up on canned essentials and have a hand-cranked can opener.

My East Slavic ancestors celebrated Dziady, a commemoration of the dead, with grandfathers being honored on one day and grandmothers and the goddess (which goddess, I am not sure!) on the Friday of that week. The spirits were welcomed with photos of themselves on family altars and offerings of food. I like to feel them nearby, and I believe that whatever cranky or unpleasant personality traits they may have had in their lifetime has been purified and smoothed by the great soul. This is where my Universalism comes in.

I look forward to our All Souls Service and Halloween party this weekend. Please bring framed photos of beloveds who have passed away since All Souls 2025. That extra hour will give everyone a chance to get to church on time!

In faith, hope and love,

Rev. Vicki